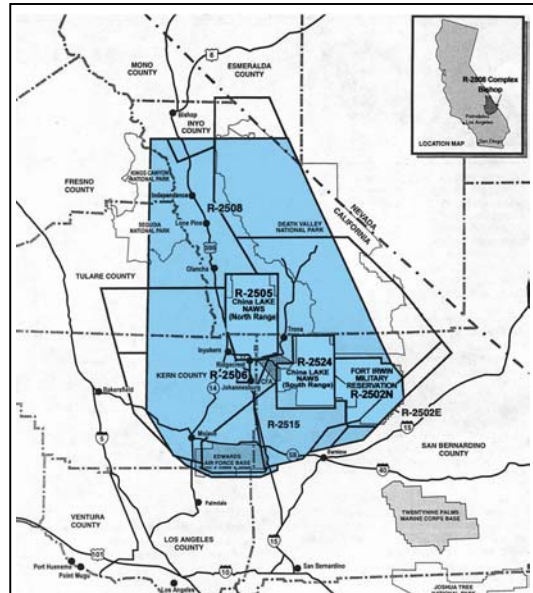




China Lake Noise Fact Sheet

January 2003

Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division China Lake manages three restricted airspace areas overlying the land addressed in the Comprehensive Land Use Management Plan (CLUMP). These areas are known as R-2505, R-2524 and R-2506. A restricted airspace area is designated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to support military activity. While concurrent use by civil aviation is precluded for safety and security reasons, airspace is made available to the public when possible. Altitude blocks are released to the FAA to allow joint use by civil and other military aircraft.



Modern aircraft and weapons systems are faster and have longer ranges than their predecessors. Because of this, aircraft maneuvers require the additional airspace provided by the R-2508 Complex (outlined on map).

The R-2508 Complex, which extends into the Owens Valley a few miles south of the town of Bishop, is a special use airspace that surrounds and includes China lake's restricted areas, as well as the restricted airspace for the Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base and the National Training Center

Fort Irwin. Management of the R-2508 Complex is the responsibility of the Commanders of the three military bases.

Generally, noise from military operations in the vicinity of China Lake is caused by one of the following sources: Navy airfield operations conducted from Armitage Airfield; range test operations, such as ordnance explosions, supersonic sled tests, and related aircraft operations; and finally, other military flight activities operating in the R-2508 Complex airspace.





The Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake conducted several noise-related studies to support the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. These studies characterized the noise effects associated with current and proposed increases to established range flight operations, ordnance use on the China Lake ranges, and flight operations at the Armitage Airfield. These data were also used to support the development of an updated Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) plan that addresses noise generated by the airfield operations.

Atmospheric conditions like heavy cloud cover over the area will sometimes multiply the effects of noise by focusing or redirecting sound waves back to the ground. Noise is also amplified when it occurs in a valley between two mountain ranges, such as the Owens Valley between the Sierra and Inyo mountains.

“Noise is an inescapable byproduct of what we do,” according to Capt. Alex Hnarakis, Commanding Officer of NAWS China Lake. “And what we do here prepares the modern warfighter for success when he or she is asked to go into harm’s way on behalf of their country.”

Every effort is made at China Lake to mitigate noise created by military

operations. NAWS China Lake has developed a comprehensive noise complaint program to better serve the local communities.

Although an operation causing noise may appear to be conducted in support of China Lake’s ranges or airfield, it might also be the result of another military activity operating in the R-2508 Complex. Any Public Affairs Office from the tri-services can accept an initial noise complaint and start an investigation. The identified unit is directed to correct any problems, and the reporting person is contacted for final closeout of the investigation. The Public Affairs Office receiving the initial complaint is the point of contact throughout the process, regardless of the aircraft identification. Those reports involving damage claims may be forwarded to a different command for claims processing, but the original Public Affairs Office maintains continuity throughout the process. This ensures that the reporting person is not referred from one person to another to get a response to a complaint.

Persons with reports of noise or aircraft flying too low should contact one of the three Public Affairs offices as soon as possible. Receiving reports within 15 days after the incident is important to ensure FAA flight data is available to support the investigation. Reports received after that time will still be investigated, but identification of the specific activity involved may be difficult to determine.

To report a complaint, or for more information about the process, please contact the China Lake Public Affairs Office at (760) 939-3511.